

Morgantown Green Team: Minutes of the March 2015 Meeting

Attending: Lisa Lagana (Chair), Joey James (Downstream Strategies), Pam Cubberly (Green Nights), Mayor Jenny Selin, Ella Belling (Mon River Trail Conservancy), Trevor Lloyd (City of Morgantown liaison), Amanda Stoner (Recycling Intern), Jim Kotcon, (Energy Committee), Corey McDonald (WVU journalism student), and WVU students from the WVU Human Dimensions of Natural Resources class: Grant Stinson (Parks, and Tourism major), Amber Pitard, and Rachel Wasserman.

I. Old Business

Business Recycling. Trevor Lloyd introduced Amanda Stoner as Michelle Sloane's replacement as Recycling Intern. The three of them held a transition meeting to bring Amanda up to speed, as well as met with the new city attorney to explore how state legislation and city ordinances might create opportunities to push business recycling forward in Morgantown. See New Business for further details.

II. New Business

A. Business Recycling. Building on substantial work completed by intern Michelle Sloane last fall, *Amanda Stoner* and *Trevor Lloyd* are starting a two-pronged effort: researching legislation and ordinances (as noted above) and education efforts to get more businesses involved in effective recycling. Amanda noted that city ordinances were required to match the 1993 state code on recycling and cities are required to submit an implementation plan. Morgantown apparently has not yet submitted such a plan, which may create opportunities to expand business and other recycling in the city.

Joey James said the state senate was considering Senate Bill 352 on "Expanding scope of cooperative associations to goods and services including recycling" (see attachment 1, from *The Preston County News & Journal*).

Discussion turned to several issues regarding business and existing residential single-stream recycling, including reports on Facebook that recycling collected was not being recycled and observations that some households were putting trash into recycling bins. Although Republic Services and the Pittsburgh company that processes single-stream recycling from Morgantown appear to have a clear process for recycling what residents collect through a Pittsburgh single-stream recycling facility, there is currently no way for the city to actually determine how much recycling is being recycled or how much is being diverted to landfills. Hard evidence is needed on this in order to do something about any problem that might exist. Further research is needed.

Mayor Selin suggested finding out when Republic Services contract was up as that is when the city has the opportunity to negotiate with the company on what the city wants it to do.

Amanda also described the need for education to increase business recycling. Many businesses have not known they have the opportunity to do single-stream recycling with Republic Services, which should be doing more marketing to and education of businesses.

To address possible contamination of single-stream recycling collected with regular trash by residents, several ideas were raised: labels on recycling totes and an insert in Republic Services bills listing what was okay to recycle.

Action: Amanda working with Trevor will research what other cities are doing in the way of successful legislation/ordinances and education. She will also meet with business leaders to explore educational efforts.

Action: Amanda and/or Trevor will find out when the Republic Services contract is up.

- B. Green Night on Solar Cooperative.** Pam Cubberly briefly reported that the February 19 Green Night had attracted 25-some people on a very cold night. The meeting was videotaped and is available now, both on WV SUN's Morgantown Solar Coop Web page (<http://www.wvsun.org/solar-coops/morgantown-solar-co-op>) and on the Green Morgantown Facebook Group. Pam, Joey, and Tyler George of the Morgantown Solar Initiative have since met to find ways to promote the coop. Emily Stiever of WV SUN reported that 13 people/households had already signed up [which has since increased to 18] and is ready to have an official launch meeting to officially create the coop. Joey, Pam, and Tyler are holding a second promotion committee meeting on March 11 with a number of key stakeholders to expand publicity on the coop.

Action: Pam will ask Chelsi Baker, Communications Director for the City of Morgantown, for the actual video (rather than a YouTube link) so this can be uploaded to Green Morgantown as a file.

- C. Sustainable Morgantown Initiative.** Building on last month's meeting, Joey James presented a more complete picture of the four-program Phase III of this three-year project funded by the Appalachian Stewardship Foundation (ASF). Downstream Strategies (primarily Joey and Evan Hansen) submitted an expression of interest to apply for funds for Phase III [and found out later that ASF had given them the go-ahead to submit a proposal].

Joey went into more depth about Phase III, but the most important point was that this 2015–2016 phase depends on the support and involvement of the community, especially the Green Team. The four linked programs follow:

1. **Solar cooperative for single-family homes** (with WV SUN and the Community Power Network), which will provide a substantial discount for solar photovoltaic systems to city residents.
2. **Demand response, efficiency, and solar at multifamily residences** (with Solar Holler and Mosaic Power) to install demand-response systems on electric water heaters, thereby generating funds for energy efficiency measures, including solar panels on apartment house roofs.
3. **Sustainable small business designation** (with the Green Team and City) to establish a program in which businesses take actions to improve energy efficiency or to implement renewables and receive recognition or certification, possibly through a group such as the WV chapter of the Green Building Council.
4. **Energy assessments** (not funded by grant) offered alongside the other Sustainable Morgantown programs as fee-for-service option from Leonardo Technologies, Inc., which completed 10 energy assessments in Phase 2.

The four programs would be implemented under an integrated marketing strategy. Phase III would end with a follow-up calculation of carbon emissions reduced in the city.

Lisa Lagana submitted a letter of endorsement on behalf of the Green Team to ASF to fund the grant for Downstream Strategies to complete the third phase.

Action: Joey James agreed to send the team a copy of the expression of interest to Jim Kotcon and anyone else interested on the team [see attachment #2]

- D. Mon Valley Green Space Coalition.** Ella Belling gave a brief report on progress on reviving this coalition, which was active until 2003. Several meetings have been held and a list of priority projects created. Ella is working on a website for the group that is not yet “live,” but will serve as a “clearing-house” to get people to the right groups on the right projects. She asked the team to let her know if they would like to link their website to the initiative. [Coalition contact: Ella at ella@montrails.org or Rick Landenberger at Rick@wvlandtrust.org].
- E. LED street lights for the city.** Trevor Lloyd announced that the power company has decided to offer a tariff for LED street lamps, which should be an option for the city as soon as July 2015. He asked the team to work on providing an objective opinion on whether the city should move forward with LED street lights. The power company would probably offer the lights for purchase in bulk. Although the initial cost would be high, the energy savings would be significant. The team should take a look at the offer, look at the historical data, and inform the City Council on what makes sense. He will work with team members in coming months as he finds out more.

III. Adjournment. The meeting adjourned at 7:00 pm. Minutes submitted by Pam Cubberly, March 9, 2015.

Next meeting: April 6, 5:30pm to 7:00pm, in City Council Chambers, 389 Spruce Street.

1. Article posted from *The Preston County News & Journal* (Saturday, February 28, 2015 12:00 am):

“Senate Bill Would Enable Alternate Recycling for Businesses

Posted: Saturday, February 28, 2015 12:00 am

CHARLESTON — A bill moving through the Senate may make recycling feasible for small businesses and individuals who cannot afford to pay for commercial recycling services under existing regulations.

Senate Bill 352 would allow businesses or individuals to form a non-profit recycling cooperative, which would be able to bypass the requirement to obtain a certificate of need in order for the co-op to operate.

The co-op would only be able to serve its members and can only have one truck. Recyclables would be taken to a local recycling center or wherever the co-op would choose.

“We have no interest in being a multi-million dollar waste-hauler,” said West Virginia Sustainable Business Council Co-founder Jeni Burns.

Burns is the owner of Ms. Groovy’s Kitchen in Charleston and said if the law is passed, she hopes to start such a co-op in Kanawha County.

Currently, only waste haulers who receive a certificate of need from the state Public Service Commission are legally allowed to collect commercial waste and recycling. Those certificates are typically granted for specific geographic areas, therefore essentially creating state-sanctioned monopolies or oligopolies.

The problem for small businesses, Burns said, is that if a business wants to recycle, the cost for both refuse and recycling is too much to afford.

“At that point for a lot of businesses, waste hauling fees end up being more than what their electric bill is or what their water bill is,” Burns said. “It just does not make sense. It’s more an affordability factor.”

Burns and West Virginia Citizen Action Group counsel Emmett Pepper said the bill, sponsored by Sen. Chris Walters, appears to have bipartisan support.

Pepper also pointed out the bill will move West Virginia closer to recycling goals the state set in the early 1990s that were never met or enforced.

Kanawha County also has a voter-approved recycling ordinance from the 1990s that was never enforced, either.

For the current bill to have a chance to become law, it must be passed out of the Senate Judiciary Committee by March 1, or else the bill automatically dies. The bill also covers co-op associations for certain agriculture and artisan goods and services as well.”

2. Expression of interest, Downstream Strategies to ASF for Phase III

Assessing and Implementing Energy Saving Measures in Morgantown to Reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions

The overall goal of this three-phase project is to identify energy-saving opportunities in Morgantown that, when implemented, will save money and reduce GHG emissions. In Phase 1, we calculated a community GHG inventory for the city. In Phase 2, which is nearly complete, we identified specific residential and commercial opportunities to reduce emissions by compiling existing data and developing new data from a homeowner survey, residential and commercial energy assessments, and residential solar assessments. We also disseminated information at public and private meetings. A final report will present scenarios that calculate the GHG reductions possible with implementation of various levels of efficiency and renewable measures.

Phase 3, the subject of this proposal, focuses on implementation. Under a new Sustainable Morgantown initiative, we propose four linked programs to incentivize and promote investments in efficiency and renewables.

1. Solar cooperative for single-family homes. We will partner with Community Power Network (CPN), the Morgantown Green Team (MGT), and the City to implement a solar cooperative that will provide a steep discount for solar PV systems to city residents. CPH has successfully implemented numerous solar coops from Washington, DC to Fayette and Monroe counties in WV. We will organize meetings, sign up homeowners, solicit proposals from solar installers, select an installer, and oversee the installation process.

2. Demand response, efficiency, and solar at multi-family residences. We will partner with Solar Holler (SH) and Mosaic Power (MP) to install demand-response systems on hot water heaters, which automatically turn the heaters off when grid demand is high—without disrupting service. The \$100 annual payments for each system will help make efficiency and solar projects affordable at these apartment buildings or dorms. SH has successfully teamed with MP to implement such a system at the Shepherdstown, WV Presbyterian Church.

3. Sustainable small business designation. We will partner with the MGT and the City to establish a program modeled after the Sustainable Pittsburgh's Sustainable Business Designation Program. Businesses that take certain steps, including actions to improve energy efficiency or to implement renewables, will qualify for designation. The City will publicly recognize such businesses and help market the program.

4. Energy assessments. While we do not seek ASF funding for this task, we will market energy assessments alongside the other Sustainable Morgantown programs and refer people and businesses to Leonardo Technologies, Inc., the firm that completed the assessments in Phase 2.

We will design and implement a unified public relations effort for all four programs in the Sustainable Morgantown initiative. This will include social media, Web-based information, a mailer to Morgantown households, presentations at public meetings, and other efforts.

For each program, we will track energy savings and GHG reductions. At the end of the project period, we will produce a report that documents the GHG reductions accomplished via the Sustainable Morgantown initiative.